



Governor's 2-1-1 Advisory Committee

Meeting: March 19, 2004 (10:00 A.M.)

Subject: Meeting Notes – 4/7/04

I. Attendance

A. Members Present

- Chris Cummiskey, Director, Government Information Technology Agency (GITA) - Chair
- Roberto Armijo, Community Information and Referral – Existing I&R Provider member
- Melissa Hartman, City of Tucson member
- Mark Lewis, Hopi Tribe (telephonically) – Tribal member
- Jim Puza, Salvation Army – Nonprofit coordinator of disaster relief services member
- Brian Spicker, Valley of the Sun United Way – Current funder of I&R systems member
- Annette Stein, Maricopa County – Urban County Government member
- Rita Weatherholt, Cochise County – Rural City/County Government member
- Neal Young, City of Phoenix member

B. Members Absent

- Jill Harrison, Area Agency on Aging/WACOG – Nonprofit coordinator of service providers member
- Joel Weeks, City of Show Low – Rural City/County Government member

II. Introductions and Opening Remarks – *Director Cummiskey*

Director Cummiskey briefly discussed the goals of the 2-1-1 project and his excitement in regard to the support of the Advisory Committee members who represent a cross-section of key stakeholders in health and human services and homeland security.

He emphasized that 2-1-1 must have strong leadership and collaboration among many entities within the state. He introduced the first meeting as an opportunity to discuss the project, the Committee's role and what lies ahead.

The presentations from this meeting will be posted on the web at: http://www.az211.gov/advisory_committee/meeting/.

III. Presentation: 2-1-1 Overview, Goals and Benefits – Keely Varvel Hartsell, Deputy Director, Governor’s Office of Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF)

In addition to her presentation, Ms. Hartsell distributed and the Committee discussed a proposed future meeting schedule. She also explained that the website (www.az211.gov) will house up-to-date 2-1-1 information and documents to help the Committee, Council and members of the community keep apprised of project progress.

IV. Presentation: Roles & Responsibilities; Current Activities – DJ Harper, Communications & Outreach Manager, GITA

V. Questions and Discussion

A. Mr. Spicker Question – What is DEMA?

Mr. Harper: The Department of Emergency and Military Affairs. DEMA is responsible for an emergency fusion center and other emergency response and homeland security activities.

Director Cummiskey: DEMA is a planning shop; it also has the expertise to handle the operational oversight of a project like 2-1-1.

B. Member Question – What is a fusion center?

Mr. Harper: The center synthesizes data and identifies trends across multiple government (State, local, federal) organizations.

C. Mr. Armijo Question – What kind of issues may occur with the Arizona Corporation Commission?

Ms. Hartsell: There are issues about how all providers in the State, and all technology, such as cell phones, etc. will interface with 2-1-1. We had some initial contacts with the Corporation Commission in 2003, but we need to ramp up coordination with the Commission.

Director Cummiskey: We recognize there are broader issues associated with a statewide 2-1-1 plan rather than a 2-1-1 system limited to Maricopa County. We will therefore need to work more closely with the Commission to identify and address any such issues.

D. Member Question - Are the Governor’s Council meetings open to the public?

Director Cummiskey: Yes, they are open meetings. Since all Council members are cabinet members, the Council meetings are scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m., after the Governor’s cabinet meeting.

- E. Mr. Lewis Comment - In regards to tribal and rural areas, we may want to keep tribal leaders in the loop during this process because we may need memorandums of understanding (MOUs), etc. from them to implement 2-1-1. We may want to set up a meeting with the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona to brief them on this project.

Director Cummiskey: I concur. I hope we can rely on you to lead the charge in regard to this coordination effort. Please let the project management team know when there is anything it can do to support these efforts.

- F. Mr. Lewis Comment – Rural areas have lagging technological infrastructure. This will be a challenge to the goal of a statewide 2-1-1 system.

Director Cummiskey: I concur. In addition, for your information, the Governor has tasked GITA, in conjunction with the Department of Commerce, to develop a statewide telecommunications policy. This effort is designed to link the various telecommunications initiatives (i.e., Topaz, Canamex, broadband studies, etc.) under way in the State under one umbrella to help the State see how to drive progress through these initiatives. Over time, the State hopes to use these initiatives to identify and fill technological gaps in the State.

VI. Presentation: 2-1-1 Strategic Plan – Lisa Dee Meyerson, Statewide Projects Manager, GITA

Ms. Meyerson noted that the strategic plan is designed to be a directional document for the implementation of a statewide 2-1-1 system. She also discussed that, in addition to the Strategic Plan, a Phase 1 Request for Proposal (RFP) is under development. She indicated that a few committee members have been asked to review drafts of the RFP (under a non-disclosure obligation) to ensure that all relevant issues are addressed by the RFP. She stated that once the 2-1-1 Phase 1 RFP (and related Project Investment Justification or 'PIJ') is developed and issued, discussion will begin on Phase 2 issues. A planning stage for Phase 2 was intentionally built into the Strategic Plan for during/ after Phase 1 and before Phase 2.

Director Cummiskey said that the normal routine would be to get the Committee all documents well in advance. In this case, the timing was difficult. He notes that we did incorporate input into the Strategic Plan from stakeholders, many of whom are now Committee members, received through discussions and public meetings in 2003.

The process for planning and documenting activities for the balance of Phase 1 and for Phase II will be even more interactive.

VII. Further Questions and Discussion

A. Ms. Hartman Question – Are we really moving toward call centers reached through a set aside number?

Ms. Hartsell: Funding and technology permitting, we hope to have call centers in Tucson, Phoenix, and other locations. The database content is the foundation for a full 2-1-1 system so we are moving ahead with the database development in Phase 1 rather than waiting for 2-1-1 call centers to be up and running and then developing the database.

B. Ms. Hartman Question – Where will the information come from?

Ms. Hartsell: To the extent it can be acquired/obtained and consolidated, the idea is to use resources that are already in existence and available.

Director Cummiskey: We are trying to get as much information in the database as possible. The RFP will create a database for the data to be housed within and a related web site.

Ms. Hartsell: The State plans to own the 2-1-1 database.

VIII. Discussion: Population of the Database – Keely Varvel Hartsell

Topic: What are the kinds of things beyond homeland security that could conceivably be added to the 2-1-1 database?

A. Mr. Armijo: I&Rs currently have a comprehensive database of government resources (from all levels), non-profit community resources, faith-based services, and self-help support groups. Among the data that we (I&Rs) currently collect, but could collect more efficiently, are services provided by civic organizations such as Rotary and Lions Clubs (particularly those services offered to individuals like scholarships, funding drives and holiday assistance drives), professional organizations (e.g., technical assistance available through legal and medical groups) and trade groups. These organizations offer very unique services that could be of value to the public.

B. Ms. Hartman: This database would not be good if it was just a list. It also needs to have the availability of services as well as information about what a person should expect if they go to these organizations for services (e.g. do they need to bring ID). How do we identify services that are no longer available? Ideally the database would eventually have real time information and related functionality. How do we enhance the lists of data? There are services now provided by the county that may not be up to date, therefore a re-inventory of county and other government services should be considered to ensure all the data on government services is accurate.

Ms. Hartsell: The database should eventually have some real-time updates for critical information such as when there are no beds available in homeless or domestic violence shelters and for topics that lots of people call about such as child care subsidies – for example, the system could be designed so that it could inform people if there are no more childcare subsidies available. You do not want citizens to call 2-1-1 and then have a failure when they follow the referral they are given. Prioritization is key. This Committee and the Governor’s Council will need to decide what the main services are that need real time information, as we cannot have this kind of information for everything.

C. Mr. Armijo: The database could include after school programs.

D. Ms. Hartsell: Perhaps we could consider including some information in the database regarding school test scores and other helpful information to persons looking to relocate to the area. We could also add information about the childcare rating system being developed for parents. In the public hearings, people suggested that the system should have intelligent searching capability – if someone types in “child care,” the web site should ask if they are also interested in WIC or KidsCare. Call center operators should be trained to do this too.

E. Mr. Spicker: Consider adding an employee assistance component to the database. What would the workforce community need/want in the database?

F. Ms. Hartsell Question – What kind of job training information is in the current I&R database?

Ms. Weatherholt: It is limited to the non-profit sector and to some extent includes information about community colleges and their programs (e.g. job training).

Mr. Armijo: This area of information on job training related programs can be expanded. Right now, the I&R information available is mainly ESL classes and similar level courses. It would be good if we could add more information about “for profit” activities to the database as well, such as, again, job training but also assisted living facilities and their programs.

G. Member Question – What will be the difference between the 2-1-1 database and the Yellow Pages? How will the data be delivered?

Staff Response: The 2-1-1 database will include more than just Yellow Page listings. It will include information about the services offered, hours of operation, etc. depending on the subject area.

Ms. Hartsell: We are currently contemplating a system that would be more interactive and informational - a screen would request the client to input

certain information about what service he/she needs - and return relevant results.

H. Mr. Spicker: The fire department and police officers play an incredible role in knowing the pulse of what is happening in the community. As the 2-1-1 project develops, we should gather additional input from emergency responders. They would know a lot about the needs of people not already in the system. They could help us prioritize what types of information we give out and what information is updated more frequently.

I. Mr. Puza: At this point, has any consideration been given to the ability of this database to receive emergency information? Inputs of information? For example, currently the state relies on private nonprofit organizations for donations management and volunteer management. The State should investigate including donations and volunteer management in the 2-1-1 system. In regard to providing disaster relief services and taking care of unmet needs at the state level, we are not at all where we should be. Southern Arizona VOAD is further along than the state level VOAD and a lot of thinking is going into these issues by them. Maybe we could create a statewide database for this information through the 2-1-1 system.

J. Ms. Meyerson Question – Regarding the existing I&R web site and related directories, how is bilingual information presented? How can we get to a bilingual 2-1-1 system (other than bilingual operators)?

Mr. Armijo: Our web site has a translation button but it is not reliable. There are not these resource tools in other languages.

Ms. Weatherholt: There are translation engines but many are inadequate. Is there a way to fine-tune them from a technological perspective for our region?

Director Cummiskey: This is the same issue addressed in creating a bilingual State web portal. Should the state put in inadequate software just to have something or wait until the technology is better?

K. Mr. Armijo: A great service would be if the organization itself could submit updated information to the 2-1-1 database regarding their organization voluntarily. Then a 2-1-1 employee could review the information to see if it should be updated as a control/oversight. This process would be especially helpful on critical services.

Ms. Hartsell: An idea offered earlier in this process was to change State and Foundation policies to include a requirement or incentive for organizations to update their information to 2-1-1. If a group received funds from the state or a Foundation, they would be asked to update their information periodically.

Ms. Weatherholt: Currently I&Rs update information daily, based on documents that have come into the office, and on a more formal basis monthly.

Committee Member Comment: We also need to consider how emergency plan information is updated – it may need to be on a different schedule than other services or information.

Ms. Hartsell: It sounds like we will need to develop a tiered prioritization system for updates based on, for example: tier 1 (Yellow Pages type information), tier 2 (more detailed type information), and tier 3 (robust and more real time information for a handful of critical and high demand services).

L. Ms. Hartman Question – Can we provide a link to other relevant websites?

Staff Response: Yes, this is certainly contemplated. The system should provide a seamless link directly to another organization's web site.

M. Ms. Stein Question – Are you planning to link to the 'Senior Benefits Checkup' system?

Ms. Hartsell: Yes. 2-1-1 will serve as the doorway, making it easier for people to link to other systems like Senior Benefits Checkup that help them determine eligibility and obtain services. 2-1-1 will connect with, but will not duplicate, these services. We also need to make sure people get the same, consistent information whether they call the 211 operator or go to the web site and are then linked to another system (e.g. Senior Benefits Checkup).

N. Mr. Armijo: Georgia saw a 40% increase in referrals, which could overwhelm service organizations that are being referred to. The State should consider this possible result.

O. Director Cummiskey (wrapping up discussion): What are the priorities? What scope should the data encompass? Please consider these issues over the next few weeks and provide us with your input by e-mail, phone calls or in any other convenient manner.

IX. Concluding Remarks -- Director Cummiskey

A. This Committee should have regularly scheduled meetings, tentatively the third Friday of the month from 10:30 AM to Noon.

B. Please give the issues we have discussed some thought and e-mail or contact us with your comments and suggestions.

C. Mr. Spicker Question – Can the Committee get a staff roster?

Staff Response: A staff contact sheet was distributed.

X. Meeting Adjourned